

The Man From Brodney's

By GEORGE BARR M'CUTCHEON

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CHAPTER XXII—(Continued)

They were starting across the chamber toward the door when a faint, pale light came rolling up to the chamber through the secret passage. Quick as a flash Selim, who realized that they could not run and open the door leading to the stairs, turned in among the huge wine casks, first blinding his lantern. He whispered for the others to follow. In a moment they were squeezing themselves through the narrow spaces between the dark strong smelling casks back into a darkness so opaque that it seemed lifeless.

"They won't suspect that we are here," whispered Selim as the door to the passage creaked. "Keep quiet! Don't breathe!"

The single electric light was still burning as Selim had found it when he first came. The door swung open slowly, heavily, and Jacob von Blitz and covered, peering with perspiration and panting scarcely, stepped into the light. Behind him came a man with a lantern and behind him two others.

They were white men, all. Von Blitz turned suddenly and cursed the man with the lantern. The fellow was ready to drop with exhaustion. Evidently it had been no easy task to remove the chests.

CHAPTER XXII.

SEVERAL PHILOSOPHERS.

THE four burly men sat down upon the chests. Von Blitz alone being visible to the watchers. They were fagged to the last extreme.

"His der last," panted Von Blitz, blowing hard and stretching his big arms. "I fix him," he growled. "His time will come, by tam! I let him know he can't take my vives away mit him. Der dog! I fix him some day purdy soon. Und dem tam vimmens! Dey run away mit him, eh? Ach, Gott, if I could only put my hands by der necks yet!"

"Vat for you fret, Jacob?" growled one of the Boers. "You couldn't take those vimmens back by Europe mit you. I tink you got goat luck by losing dem. Misdar Chase can't take dem back needer. Don't fret."

"Vell," said Von Blitz, arising "vome on, boys. Dis is der last of dem. Dey blow der tam-ting up. Grab hold dere, Joost. Up mit it, Jan. Vat's No?"

"Gott in himmel, Jacob, wait a minutes! My back is broke!" protested Joost stubbornly. Von Blitz swore steadily for a minute, but could not move the impassive Boers.

"Vat for you tink I vant you in on dis, you vime? To set around und dream? Nobody else knows about dis treasure, und we got it all for our selves—ve four und no more, und you say, 'Vat's der hurry?' It's all ours. Ve divide it oop in der cave mit all der money ve get from der bank. Vat? Yes? Den, von der time comes, ve send it all by Australia und no von is der vicer. Der natives can't know, und der white pebbles von't be alive to care about it."

"I don't like der scheme to rob der bank," growled Jan. "If der pebbles get on to us, dey would cut us to pieces."

"But dey von't get on to us, you fool. Dey couldn't take it themselves if it was handed to dem. Dey're too honest—yes, Vell, don't dey say ve're honest too? Vell, vat more you vant? Dey don't know how much money und rubles dere is in der bank. Ve von't take all of it—und dey von't know der difference. Ve burn der books. Das is all. Ve get in by der bank tonight, boys."

"I don't like id," said Joost. "Id's stealing from our friends, Jacob. Besides, if der oder heirs should go before der government mit der story, vat den?"

"Der oder heirs vill never get der chance, boys. Dey vill die mit der plague—ha, ha! Sure! Dere von't be no oder heirs. Rasula says it must be so. Ve can't wait, boys. It vill be years before der business is settled. Ve must get vat ve can now und wait for der decision afterwards. Brodney has wrote to Rasula, saying dat der Chase feller is to stay here redder ve vant him or not. He says Chase is a goat man! By tam, it makes me cry to tink of vat he has done by me—dat goat man!"

To the amazement of all the burly German began to blubber.

"Come on, Jacob," said Jan gruffly.

Von Blitz shook his fist at the door across the chamber and thundered his final maledictions.

"Sir John says in der letter to Misdar Chase dere is a movements on foot in London to settle der contest out of court," volunteered Joost.

"Sure, but he also say dat ve all may die mit old-age before it is over yet."

"Don't get der plague!" said Jan. They growled mightily as they lifted the heavy chests to their shoulders and started for the door.

"Close der door, Jan," commanded Von Blitz from the passage. "Ve vill light der fuse ven ve haf got beyond der first bend. Vat? Look! By tam, von of you swine has broke der fuse. Valt! Ve vill fix him now."

The door was closed behind them, but the listeners could hear them repairing the damage that Selim had done to the fuse.

Led by Selim, the four made a rush for the door leading into the chateau. They threw it open and passed through, flying as if for their lives. No one could tell how soon an explosion might bring disaster to the region; they put distance between them and the powder keg. Selim paused long enough to drop the bolts and turn the great key with the lever. At the second turn in the narrow corridor he overtook Chase and the scurrying women.

"Is there nothing to be done?" cried the princess. "Can we not prevent the explosion? They will cut off our means of escape in that!"

"I know too much about gunpowder, princess," said Chase dryly, "to fool with it. It's like a mule. It kicks hard. Gad, it was hard to stand there and hear those brutes planning it all and not be able to stop them!"

The princess was once more at his side. He had clasped her arm to lead her securely in the wake of Neenah's electric lantern. She came to a sudden stop.

"And pray, Mr. Chase," she said sharply, as if the thought occurred to her for the first time, "why didn't you stop them? You had the advantage. You and Selim could have surprised them—you could have taken them without a struggle."

He laughed softly, deprecatingly, not a little impressed by the justice of her criticism.

"No doubt you consider me a coward," he said ruefully.

"You know that I do not," she protested. "I—I can't understand your motive; that is all."

"You forget that I am the representative of these very men. I am the trusted agent of Sir John Brodney, who has refused to supplant me with another. I can't very well represent Sir John and at the same time make prisoners or corpses of his clients, even though I am being shielded by their legal foes. I'll not have Von Blitz saying, even to himself, that I have not only stolen his wives, but have also cast him into the hands of his Philistines. It may sound quixotic to you, but I think that Lord Deppingham and Mr. Browne will understand my attitude."

"But Von Blitz has sworn to kill you," she expostulated, with some heat.

"You are wasting your integrity, I must say, Mr. Chase."

"Would you have me shoot him from ambush?" he demanded.

"Not at all. You could have taken him captive and held him safe until the time comes for you to leave the island."

"He would not have been my captive in any event. I could do no more than deliver him into the hands of his enemies. Would that be fair?"

"But he is a thief!"

"No more so than Taswell Skaggs and John Wyckholme, who unquestionably cheated the natives out of the very treasure we have seen carried away. I am not a constable nor a thief catcher. I am a soldier of the defense, not an officer of the crown, at this stage of the game. Today I shall contrive to send word to Rasula that Von Blitz has stolen the treasure chests. Mr. Von Blitz will have a sad time explaining this little defection to his friends. We must not overlook the fact that Lady Deppingham and Robert Browne are quite willing to take everything from the islanders. Everything that Taswell Skaggs and John Wyckholme possessed in this island belongs to them under the terms of the will."

They were at the top of the second flight of stairs by this time and quite a distance from the treasure chamber. His coolness, the absence of any sign of returning sentiment, was puzzling her sorely. Half an hour before she had been carried away, rendered helpless by the passion that swayed him. Now he spoke and looked as if he had forgotten the result of his storming. Strangely enough, she was piqued.

When they came into the well lighted upper corridor he proceeded ruthlessly to upset all of her harsh calculations. He stopped suddenly, stepping directly in front of her. As she drew up in surprise he reached down and took both of her hands in his. For the moment she was too amazed to oppose this sudden action. She

looked up into his face, many emotions in her own—reproof, wonder, dismay, hauteur, joy.

"Wait," he said gently. They were quite alone. She saw the most wonderful light in his gray eyes. Her lips parted in quick, timorous confusion. "I love you. I am sorry for what I did down there. I couldn't help it—nor could you. Yet I took a cruel advantage of you. I know what you've been thinking too. You have been saying to yourself that I wanted to see how far I could go. Don't speak. I know! You are wrong. I've absolutely worshipped you since those first days in Thorberg, wildly, hopelessly, day and night. I was afraid of you—yes, afraid of you because you are a princess. But I've got over all that, Geneva. You are a woman, a living, real woman, with the blood and the heart and the lips that were made for me to crave. I want to tell you this here in the light of day, not in the darkness that hid all the truth in me except that which you might have felt in my kiss."

"Please—please don't," she said once more, her lip trembling, her eyes full of the softness that the woman who loves cannot hide. "You shall not go on! It is wrong!"

"It is not wrong!" he cried hotly. "My love is not wrong. I want you to understand and to believe. I can't hope that you will be my wife. It's too wildly improbable. You are not for such as I. You are pledged to a man of your own world, your own exalted world. But listen, Geneva. See, my eyes call you darling even though my lips dare not. Geneva, I'd give my soul to hear you say that you will be my wife. You do understand how it is with me?"

The delicious sense of possession thrilled her. She glowed with the return of her self esteem, in the restoration of that quality which proclaimed her a princess of the blood. She was sure of him now. She was sure of herself. She had her emotions well in hand. And so, despite the delicious warmth that swept through her being, she chose to reveal no sign of it to him.

"I do understand," she said quietly, meeting his gaze with a directness that hurt him sorely. "And you, too, understand. I could not be your wife. I am glad, yet sorry, that you love me, and I am proud to have heard you say that you want me. But I am a sensible creature, Mr. Chase, and, being sensible, am therefore selfish. I have seen women of my unhappy station venture outside of their narrow confines in the search for lifelong joy with men who might have been kings had they not been born under happier stars—men of the great wide world instead of the soulless, heartless patch which such as I call a realm. Not one in a hundred of those women found the happiness they were so sure of grasping just outside their prison walls. It was not in the blood. We must marry and live and die in the sphere to which we were born. We must go through life unloved and unloved, bringing princes into the world, seeing happiness and love just beyond our

reach in the time. We are bound by chains no force can break—the chains of prejudice."

She had withdrawn her hands from his. He was standing before her as calm and unmoved as a statue.

"Just the same," he went on gently, "you love me as I love you. You kissed me. I could feel love in you then. I can see it in you now. You will marry Prince Karl in June, and all the rest of your life will be bleak December. You will never forget this month of March—our month." He paused for a moment to look deeply into her incredulous eyes. His face writhed in sudden pain. Then he burst forth with a vehemence that startled her. "My God, I pity you with all my soul! All your life!"

(To be continued.)



LEGAL ADVERTISEMENTS

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF THE COLE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That we, P. J. Cole, A. C. Cole, George R. Hill, P. J. Cole, Jr., and A. G. Oliver, have this day voluntarily associated ourselves together for the purpose of forming a corporation under the laws of the territory of Arizona, and we hereby certify, acknowledge and adopt the following Articles of Incorporation:

ARTICLE I.

The name of this Company shall be

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENTS

and is the COLE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY.

ARTICLE II.

The principal place of business of this corporation shall be in the City of Globe, Gila County, Arizona Territory, and it shall have branch offices at such other places as its Board of Directors may from time to time select.

ARTICLE III.

The general nature of business, pursuit and enterprise proposed to be transacted by this corporation is as follows:

(a) To purchase or otherwise acquire, own, hold, sell, bond, rent, lease, mine and work mines and mineral lands and the products thereof.

(b) To purchase or otherwise acquire, own, hold, sell, bond, rent, lease and sublet water, water rights, machinery, supplies, materials and other articles necessary or convenient for use in connection with and in the carrying on of the business herein mentioned or any part thereof.

(c) To purchase or otherwise acquire, own, hold, sell, bond, rent, lease, sublet, maintain, manage or construct pipe lines, tracks, reservoirs, roads, tramways, flumes, canals, ditches, embankments, telephone or telegraph lines, railroads and other works, reduction, milling, smelting and refining plants, property or appliances that may be incident or auxiliary to the main business of this corporation, as set forth in subdivision (a) hereinabove, or that may be deemed necessary, expedient, useful or convenient to said main business by the Board of Directors of this corporation.

(d) To sell, convey, bond, lease, mortgage or otherwise dispose of any and all of its property of every character whatsoever.

ARTICLE IV.

The amount of the capital stock of this corporation shall be Three Hundred Thousand (\$300,000.00) Dollars, divided into three hundred thousand (300,000) shares of the par value of One (\$1.00) Dollar each, and the time when and the condition upon which said Capital Stock is to be paid in shall be regulated and provided for by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE V.

The time of the commencement of this corporation shall be the date of the filing, in the office of the Auditor of the Territory of Arizona, a certified copy of these Articles of Incorporation and the termination shall be twenty-five years thereafter.

ARTICLE VI.

The affairs of this corporation shall be conducted by a Board of Directors consisting of five (5) persons, who shall be stockholders. A majority of said Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and the first directors shall be P. J. Cole, A. C. Cole, George R. Hill, P. J. Cole, Jr., and A. G. Oliver, who shall hold office until the first Monday of July, 1931, and until their successors are elected and qualified.

The Board of Directors shall have power at any time to fill vacancies on the Board; and adopt by-laws for the corporation, which may be altered, amended or repealed by the Board and the Board shall have the power to sell, bond, mortgage or otherwise dispose of any or all of the property of the company and exercise all of the other powers of the company hereinabove referred to, without the consent or approval of the stockholders.

ARTICLE VII.

The officers of this corporation shall be President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, and such minor officers as the Board of Directors may, from time to time, deem it wise and expedient to have. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the Board following the annual election of the said Directors. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may, in the discretion of the Board of Directors, be held by one person.

ARTICLE VIII.

The highest amount of indebtedness or liability to which this corporation is at any time to subject itself, shall in no case exceed Twenty-five Thousand (\$25,000.00) Dollars.

ARTICLE IX.

The private property of the stockholders of this corporation shall be exempt from any and all liability for the corporation debts of this corporation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and seals this 26th day of August, A. D. 1929.

P. J. COLE (SEAL)

A. C. COLE (SEAL)

A. G. OLIVER (SEAL)

P. J. COLE, JR. (SEAL)

GEO. R. HILL (SEAL)

TERRITORY OF ARIZONA,

County of Gila, ss:

Before me, Norman J. Johnson, a Notary Public in and for the County of Gila, Territory of Arizona, on this day personally appeared P. J. Cole, A. C. Cole, A. G. Oliver, P. J. Cole, Jr., and Geo. R. Hill, known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the foregoing instrument, and who acknowledged to me that they executed the same for the purpose and consideration therein expressed.

Given under my hand and seal of office this 26th day of August, A. D. 1929.

(Notarial) NORMAN J. JOHNSON, Notary Public.

My commission expires August 26, 1931.

First publication August 28, 1929.

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